

Her Sandalwood Box

By Fannie Heaslip Lea, Copyright, 1905, by Fannie Heaslip Lea.

"This is the first one he wrote me after—after—"

"After he asked you to marry him," said Wilnot grimly. "I know."

Elizabeth faltered a little. "If you would rather not?"

"If you would rather not?" said the man, so they read on.

There was no heading to the boyish scrawl, no date, and the paper was yellow with much handling:

"How did we do it, little girl? I'm lord o' the earth tonight. Is it only five hours since I left you? I'd swear it was five centuries. I'm in my room, working, but at what I don't know. Your face comes between me and the white paper—between me and the foolish, pounding keys—between me and all the world else. Ah, dearly beloved, your eyes when I kissed you, and the maddening tilt of your chin! Pen and ink's but a poor thing, after all. I write down words that mean the world and all, and they come out black, bugish things on a shiny white sheet. I'd like to write to you in forked lightning on a giant rose leaf. Good night, my piece o' the world!"

"What was his work?" asked Wilnot, with husky irreverence.

"Stories and verses. He wrote," Elizabeth laid the letter gently on the coals and drew out the next.

"There are not many," she explained. "It was only a month, and we— we saw each other so often—and I kept only the letters from that one month."

Wilnot nodded in silence.

"You are the funniest child," said the next letter. "When I think of the way I love you—it seems absurd. One ought to give you a doll or a picture book. Well, I have given you my life for the one and my heart for the other, haven't I? I'm not laughing, littlest—at least I'm only laughing that you may not know what a powerful pull you have on my heartstrings. I got a check this morning for a story I'd almost forgotten about. That's why I'm sending you a rose. It's the first thing I've bought with the money. I'm working hard on the play. It's going to be a great thing some day, and you—no, I mean we—are going to be proud of it. We'll go to the theater tonight, littlest, and burn up some of the new check."

"How old were you then?" asked Wilnot.

"I was eighteen," Elizabeth answered dreamily. "I'm twenty-five now, you know."

The letter burned slowly, and they read the next in silence.

"Sweetest," it said, "I've been ill the last two days or I'd have seen you. I've been seeing you anyhow in the shadows of the room and the window curtains and a lot of other silly places. I was out of my head, they tell me. Feel sort of crazy now." The letter was blotted, and the writing a mere scrawl.

"That big blot is where I dropped my head just now, because I was too tired to hold it up any longer. I must get back to the play tomorrow; losing too much time. Lord, how my head aches! Oh, littlest girl, I want you!"

"He was only a boy," said Elizabeth, "just a year older than I—"

"Go on," said Wilnot tensely.

Elizabeth turned over the next letter, and a withered rose fell into her lap from the infolding leaf of a torn programme.

"We went to the theater," she explained, touching the flower with gentle fingers, "and I wore the rose on my gown. It was red."

"You like red roses best," said Wilnot jealously. "Was it always so, or did you begin then?"

"I—I suppose it was then," she admitted gently. "He always sent them to me."

Wilnot started up suddenly. "I can't stand much more of this," he said. "Did you ever care for me at all?"

"Don't be angry"—Elizabeth laid a hand on his arm and drew him back. "There isn't much more, and—I think if I didn't love you I couldn't show the letters to you at all. Wait till the end—you will understand."

She laid the dead rose on the fire with the torn programme. The next was only a line or two on a narrow card.

"Flowers he sent me," Elizabeth said, "because he wanted to come that night. And this"—she glanced over a half sheet of rough paper closely covered—"he wrote to thank me for a book I sent him." She looked up at Wilnot. His eyes were dark and inscrutable, but he was white to the lips, and she hurried on.

"There's only one more to read—these are just cards that came with flowers or books."

She laid them on the fire and smoothed out the paper that had lain clinched in her hand so long.

"Is that the last?" asked Wilnot, with dry lips. She nodded, and he bent to read it.

"You are right," it said, "quite right to break with me. There are a thousand reasons why you should, and the one reason why you shouldn't, my love, is a very worthless reason. I don't blame you for not considering it. I knew it must be a mistake—you were not for me. You always gave me your cheek to kiss—and I didn't want your cheek—"

"You see," Elizabeth whispered, with a little catch in her voice.

"You never really cared for me, littlest—never cared; that is, as you can care—as you will care some day for the man who is to come to you.

He need not be jealous of me, sweet, when he does come. Your love for me was a child's love that he will not want, and that you will not give him. I have had my divine day, and it is over, but no matter who comes—in spite of the man who is to win where I have lost—you will remember—I claim that, littlest, for my right—you will remember when you love him that I taught you how. I should not write so, perhaps, but there are times when a man must speak what he knows. Keep the few things I have given you. Don't send them back to me. Put them in the sandalwood box and shut their memories in with them. I shall keep your letters. God knows they're few and cold enough.

"Oh, littlest girl, I'd never let you go in this world—if—"

Elizabeth's hand slipped softly into Wilnot's, where it rested on the arm of his chair. They sat in silence while the last letter flared up, then sank and crumbled.

"I think," at last she said softly, "that he was right. You need not be jealous of him, I was a child then. I am another self now. When you came in I had been reading his letters, and somehow in the dusk and quiet I had slipped out of myself back into the little girl he used to love. My mind was full of him and of that little girl, and I couldn't read just things at once. Then when you used his very words—it was—it was like a ghost. You see, don't you, dear? I'm not disloyal to you. It was just that I remembered, as he said I would."

"I understand," said Wilnot, holding her close. "I was a jealous fool, but you must admit that it was disconcerting to come in and find you reading over another man's letters the night before our wedding."

"It was silly, I suppose," Elizabeth admitted, "but I couldn't help it—and you understand."

"Where is he now?" asked Wilnot, kissing the soft wave of her hair. "You won't grow to care for him again, will you?"

"Oh, Will, hush!" the girl whispered, her cheek against his coat sleeve. "He's dead, dear. He died that year. Didn't I tell you at first? I thought you understood."

The sheet rattled angrily against the window pane, jarring the quiet of the shadowy room, and the fire sank and darkened.

"You will remember when you love him," quoted Wilnot softly, "that I taught you how—poor beggar!"

It Was Hard on the Family.
Modern methods of dealing with contagious diseases are a severe trial to many an old-fashioned person who in childhood lived through epidemics of various kinds.

"I thought your grandson was looking pretty peart again after his illness," said one of the residents of Canby to Zenas Sprawle, "but it struck me the rest of you looked kind of wore out. I s'pose he was pretty sick for one spell there."

"No, he wa'n't," said Mr. Sprawle stoutly. "There never was a thing the matter of him exceptin' a sore throat 'bout same as I've had dozens o' times, toweled my neck up for a night or two an' come out all right. But my son's wife she had that city doctor to him, an' he made out 'twas one o' them itises an' had him an' his ma quarantined off from the rest of us."

"He had the full use of his legs, an' the way he run over that floor above our heads was enough to wear out a hen. An' when he was able to be moved they had that part o' the house fumigated. It laid the foundations for a stomach trouble with both Marthy an' me, that fumigation did, an' I don't know as the smell will get out o' my clothes enough for me to go to church this whole winter. Get me in a middlin' warm place and that fumigatin' essence begins to try out o' my overcoat same as if 'twas kerosene. I guess there's reason enough for Marthy an' me to look wore out."—Youth's Companion.

The Lions and the Lamb.

Some 300 years ago King James I. of England visited the lions then kept in Loudon Tower, the show from which is derived "the lions" in the sense of the sights of a place. The king had had an arena built on to their cages for fights with bears, dogs and bulls, but the two lions that entered it on this day simply stood blinking. Two "racks of mutton" and "a lusty live cock" were successively thrown to them and devoured. "After this the king caused a live lamb to be easily let down unto them by a rope, and being come to the ground the lamb lay upon his knees, and both the lions stood in their former places and only beheld the lamb, but presently the lamb rose up and went unto the lions, which very gently looked upon him and smelled on him without sign of any further hurt." However, a lion and mastiff fight that followed was better "sport."

The Ice of Greenland.

The largest mass of ice in the world is probably the one which fills up nearly the whole of the interior of Greenland, where it has accumulated since before the dawn of history. It is believed to now form a block about 500,000 square miles in area and averaging a mile and a half in thickness. According to these statistics, the lump of ice is larger in volume than the whole body of water in the Mediter-

anean, and there is enough of it to cover the whole of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland with a layer about seven miles thick. If it were cut into two convenient slabs and built up equally upon the entire surface of "gallant little Wales" it would form a pile more than 120 miles high. There is ice enough in Greenland to bury the entire area of the United States a quarter of a mile deep.

An American Girl.

OF all the charming things there are To make this world a brighter one I choose—and know I am not far From picking out the right one— A girl of seventeen or so, American completely, A figure trim from head to toe, Gowned tastefully and neatly.

Look in her eyes—what wells of truth, Of sympathy and kindness! But not too long, enraptured youth, Least looking brings love's blindness. An angel? Yes, and any one Who knows gold is not copper Can see that she is full of fun, Provided it is proper.

I must confess, if Father Time Would only let me stay so, I'd stop at twenty-one, and I'm Not half ashamed to say so. I envy much the lucky man The joy of his beginning To love this fair American— His wooing and his winning.

Oh, who can lose his faith in this Our best beloved nation? Here is our hope; we cannot miss Applause and approbation. One dare not quite disparage one's Own country until others Can show such prizes for their sons And such prospective mothers! —Felix Carmen in Life.

Agreed With Him.

Host—I've been smoking an awful lot of cigars lately.

Guest (who has been offered one)—Well, if this is a sample I don't doubt your word, old man.

A Bad Memory.

The train swept into darkness.

"George," she whispered, "we are in a tunnel."

"I know that," he responded.

"Well, do you know the usual custom?"

"What custom?"

"What does a young man generally do when he is seated by a girl?"

"I d—"

"Does he sit still?"

"Oh, yes, I know what he does. H—"

"Too late. We are out of the tunnel, George."—Chicago News.

A Business Proposition.

"I think it's mean," she sobbed.

"You might give me the money I ask for. I don't think you care for me at all."

"My dear," said her close husband, "I care more for you than all the money in the world. You're worth your weight in gold, and—"

"Then why don't you give me credit for what I'm worth?"—Denver News.

Up All Night.

"The boss asked me what made me look so tired," said Galley, the clerk, "and I told him I was up early this morning."

"Huh," snorted the bookkeeper, "you never got up early in your life."

"I didn't say I got up," I said I was up."—Baltimore News.

Horse and Cow.

"Ah, your language! Eet ees so difficult."

"What's the matter, count?"

"First zis novel eet say zo man was unhorsed."

"Yes?"

"Zee eet say he was cowed."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

An Alphabetic Confusion.

"Is Mr. Scadds a man of scientific distinction?"

"Yes, indeed," answered Miss Cayenna. "He has so many college degrees that when he sends in his card you can't be sure whether it is his name or a problem in algebra."—Washington Star.

Not Much.

"Would you have loved me if I had been poor?"

"Sure. Now be satisfied, and please don't ask if I would have married you."—Houston Post.

What He Worked.

"Smoothboy got his new mining scheme on its feet in a week."

"Worked wonders, eh?"

"No; worked suckers."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

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Every season has its own diseases, but Rheumatism belongs to all, for when it gets well entrenched in the system, and joints and muscles are saturated with the poison, the aches and pains are coming and going all the time, and it becomes an all-the-year-round disease; an attack coming as quickly from sudden chilling of the body when overheated, a fit of indigestion or exposure to the damp, Easterly winds of Summer as from the keen, cutting winds, freezing atmosphere and bitter cold of Winter.

Rheumatism never comes by accident. It is in the blood and system before a pain is felt. Some inherit a strong predisposition or tendency; it is born in them; but whether heredity is back of it or it comes from imprudent and careless ways of living, it is the same always and at all seasons. The real cause of Rheumatism is a polluted, sour and acid condition of the blood, and as it flows through the body deposits a gritty, irritating substance or sediment in the muscles, joints and nerves, and it is these that produce the terrible pains, inflammation and swelling and the misery and torture of Rheumatism. No other disease causes such pain, such wide-spread suffering. It deforms and cripples its thousands, leaving them helpless invalids and nervous wrecks.

HIS WIFE A GREAT SUFFERER.

My wife had been troubled with Rheumatism for some time when she heard of S. S. S., which she tried and which cured her completely, as she has not suffered since. I recommend S. S. S. as a good medicine. Okolona, Miss. J. E. REEDER.

When neglected or improperly treated, Rheumatism becomes chronic, the pains are wandering or shifting from one place to another, sometimes sharp and cutting, again dull and aggravating. The muscles of the neck, shoulders and back, the joints of the knees, ankles and wrists, are most often the seat of pain. Countless liniments and plasters are applied to get relief, but such things do not reach the poisoned blood; their effect is only temporary; they are neither curative nor preventive. The blood must be purified, and all irritating matter removed from the circulation before permanent relief and a thorough cure is effected, and no remedy does this so certainly and so quickly as S. S. S. It contains not only purifying and tonic properties, but solvent qualities as well, all these being necessary in eradicating the poison and making a complete and lasting cure of Rheumatism. S. S. S. cleanses the

blood of all irritating matter and the acid particles are dissolved and filtered out of the system, thus relieving the muscles and joints and removing all danger of future attacks. Under its tonic effect the nervous system regains its normal tone and the appetite and digestion improve, resulting in the upbuilding of the general health. S. S. S. contains no Potash or minerals of any description, but is guaranteed purely vegetable. Old people will find it not only the best blood purifier, but a most invigorating tonic—just such a remedy as they need to enrich the blood and quicken the circulation.

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